



2022 Annual Report



El Origen project, La Guajira



Mision Gaia project, Minca

Introduction

This report is primarily an account of Children Change Colombia's work in the field and its activities to promote the protection of children's rights in Colombia during the year 2022.

The following pages contain descriptions of each of our projects in Colombia. We are pleased to be able to tell you that in 2022 we supported seven local grassroots organisations in Colombia, 2,000 children and their families, and we conducted 4 workshops with our local partners in Colombia, online and in person, as part of our capacity-building programme.

About Children Change Colombia

Children Change Colombia (CCC) is the UK's largest charity working exclusively in Colombia, with offices in London and Bogotá (Colombia) and 30 years of experience. We believe that, with the right support, Colombian children can claim their right to live safely and in peace and demand that the adults responsible for protecting their rights do so – in this way, children can change Colombia.

Over the last three decades, CCC has helped more than 65,000 children to overcome the trauma of poverty, armed conflict, displacement, and a lack of education, and has invested £13 million in more than 50 multi-annual projects all across Colombia. To help children achieve this, we rely on strong local partnerships with Colombian organisations who truly understand the needs of the children they work with, and have the experience and knowledge to find effective solutions. We are committed to working with the children who need us most and in areas (thematic and geographic) that we feel are neglected by other organisations.

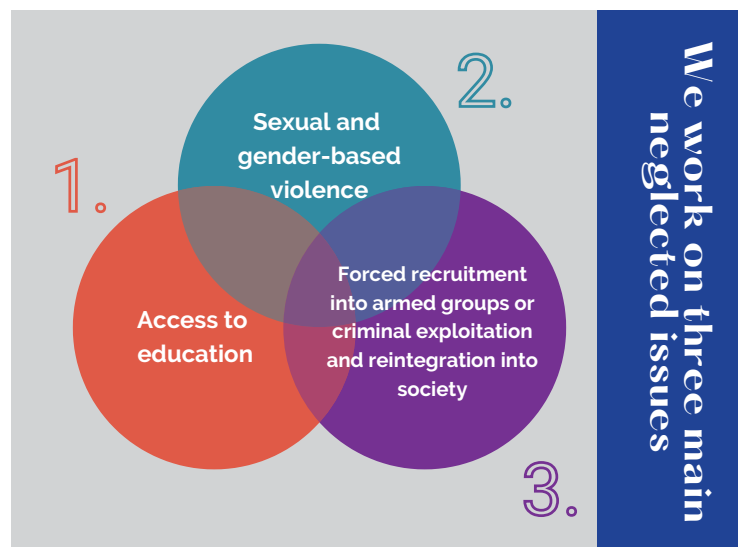
Why Colombia?

Issues like **poverty, social inequalities, armed conflict and corruption** are rooted at the center of Colombia's history. Colombia is known for its struggle to end violence and social inequalities exacerbated by armed groups such as ELN and Las FARC which historically have taken control of rural areas. The December 2022 peace negotiations with ELN has stated, "ELN leaders began a negotiation towards the disarmament with Venezuela as the guarantor country and headquarters of the negotiations"(1)

Although a peace agreement between Las FARC and the government was signed in September 2016, the situation continued to deteriorate during the last presidential period. However, together with the appointment of the president Petro, the government promised to enforce the peace treaty.

According to the National Center for Historical Memory (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica), **from 1958 to 2020, more than 17,860 Children and Young People (CYP) were recruited by armed groups** (2).

The latest figures regarding the participation of children in the war are provided but the Truth Commission report "Where there's truth there's peace": 1985 to 2016, 28,192 children were forcedly disappeared; from 1990 to 2018, 6,492 children were kidnapped; **from 1990 to 2017, 16,238 children were recruited by armed groups** and from 1985 to 2019, 3,049,527 children were victims of forced displacement.(3).



Access to education was already strained for many CYP living in rural parts of Colombia, including Chocó, the poorest Colombian municipality. Conditions of poverty and social inequity limit the quality of teaching and resources available to those able to go to school.

Despite the fact that the Colombian constitution requires that boys and girls between the ages of five and fifteen attend school, currently **approximately 1.2 million Colombian children (11% of all school-age boys and girls) do not receive any formal education.** (4)

Additionally, poverty and sexual and gender-based violence are co-related. **In 2021, about 17,000 cases were addressed to restore the rights of minors, where 52% correspond to cases of sexual violence and 72% of cases occurred inside children's homes.** Likewise, 91,982 cases of sexual violence against boys, girls and adolescents were registered between 2015 and 2019. Children between 10 to 14 years old are the most affected age group, accounting for 44% of all cases.

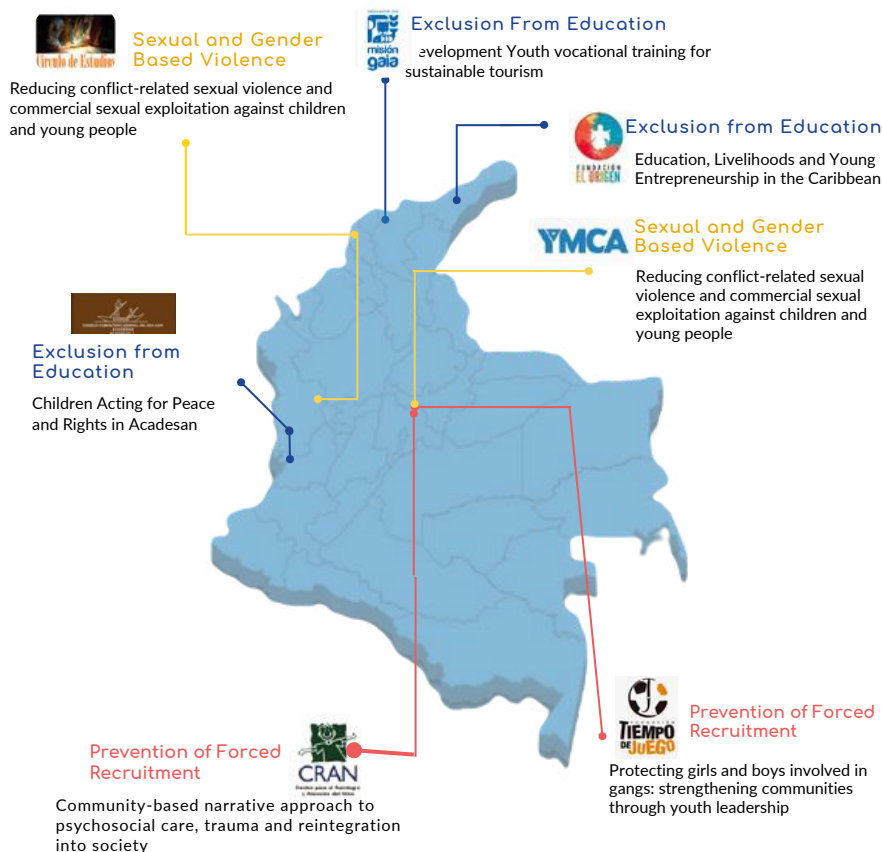
1. CNN, (cnn.com): "Colombia and the ELN open a new path to peace with negotiations in Venezuela" November 2022.

2. Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, "A war with no age" Report, February 2021

3. Truth Commission - Colombian Special Jurisdiction of Peace: Report: "There's Future where There's Truth" Chapter: "No es un mal menor" (is not a minor issue) on participation of children in the colombian war. www.comisiondelaverdad.co, August 2022.

4. Ministry of Education of Colombia and OCDE, Report: "Education in Colombia, Review of national education policies" March 2017.

What makes us different from other organisations?



Children Change Colombia seeks to complement the work of others and avoid duplication whenever possible. One of our key aims is to work on issues that are neglected by others. Many of the projects we support are pioneering services for children in areas where such services do not already exist. For instance, we work in schools in remote villages near the Pacific coast where state institutions are weak and few NGOs operate. In cases where other organisations do operate services for children, we collaborate with our partners to help them identify these organisations and then determine how they can work to complement and improve existing services.

Where possible, we help our partners to collaborate with one another and/or with other institutions responsible for protecting children's rights. We support our partners to run high impact projects and we also work hard to ensure our partners become stronger, more effective organisations as a result of our partnership. What sets us apart from many UK-based NGOs is our NGO Incubator system: we provide partner organisations with extensive training and technical support that enables them to scale up their work and access funding from other sources once our partnership ends. We facilitate links and knowledge exchanges between our partner organisations and others working in the same areas, enabling a greater impact on the lives of at risk children across Colombia. We are able to do this thanks to the presence of a permanent Finance Coordinator and a Project Director in Bogotá, Colombia, who are experts in child protection, financial management, and monitoring and evaluating projects.



ACJ project, Bogotá

CCC's work in 2022

This year has been amazing for Children Change Colombia! Most of our work with project partners and fundraising has ensured a **financial and projects growth** and a huge impact to children from the most vulnerable areas in Colombia. Among this year's highlights are those mentioned below:

- **New Mental Health project alongside CRAN and TDJ!:**

In July 2022 we launched a new three year project: **"Youth Reintegration Into Society: A Community-based Approach Towards Mental Health"**, that will be implemented in Bogotá and Villavicencio which would help children and young people (CYP) at risk of joining gangs and formerly associated with armed groups to gain access to the resources and skills they need to deal with a variety of traumatic situations and stigmas.

- **New strategic partnerships.**

This year we joined forces with The Rebel Business School and ImmerseMe to provide entrepreneurship workshops and interactive online tools to improve English practice for indigenous and rural children in Colombia.

- **Pilot with Misión Gaia in Magdalena**

In March we launched our first project in Minca, Magdalena with children from the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta; the beneficiaries include indigenous communities from the region. This project seeks to educate and motivate students and teachers from rural educational institutions of Minca, for the development of personal and professional skills that will allow them to improve their educational and professional performance, achieve their goals, break the cycle of poverty, and improve their quality of life

- **Child Trauma Training**

In partnership with Action for Child Trauma International (ACTI) we provided the staff of our partners a three day workshop on the Accelerated Trauma Technique for Children (CATT). This is the first time that this methodology, already applied in Africa and Middle East, has been taught in Las Americas and we are very proud to make this happen.



TDJ-CRAN project, Bogotá



Beneficiary from the Misión Gaia Project



1.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

“O-lab App: Improving access to education for indigenous children in rural areas in La Guajira Colombia” - El Origen Foundation

The project aimed to increase children's access to education within basic and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and maths) subjects using the O-Lab app (an offline learning platform). It also aimed to improve their academic performance, encouraging independent learning, improving their technological literacy, and improving the overall quality of their education. This project ensured that most of the participants came from indigenous communities, pushing them to receive the quality of education they deserved and teaching them life skills.

The O-Lab App: 881 beneficiaries registered in the O-Lab App application of the proposed activities during the execution of the project. The beneficiaries presented advances in the use of the O-Lab App platform, despite the country's mandatory confinement situation, as well as the low availability of connectivity and internet in rural areas.

The results were remarkable, as the students were participating not only in the offline classes provided by the app but also creating their own aligned to their ethnic culture and territory history.

88.1% of students improved their overall academic performance and their 21st-century skills by giving them access to complementary education resources in basic and STEAM subjects through the O-Lab app. 80% of students also developed their soft and socio-emotional skills and achieved their basic learning rights (milestones) established by the Ministry of Education. Finally, 80% of students strengthened their knowledge of and interest in basic and STEAM subjects and were able to create innovative and creative projects tackling the challenges facing their communities.

**Manaure municipality - Poromana Community:**

Within the productive units identified, we can mention a successful case of an entrepreneur of the Poromana community, in the municipality of Manaure. Her name is **Karen Vanessa Riveira**. With her business idea Provision of Rural Tourism and Ethnotourism services, she has achieved commercial alliances with different travel agencies, tour operators and hotels in the municipalities of Riohacha and Manaure.



“Education and Empowerment for Change and Innovation in Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta” - **Mision Gaia Foundation**

The project aimed to educate and motivate students and teachers from rural educational institutions in the district of Minca, for the development of personal and professional skills that will allow them to improve their educational and professional performance, feel empowered in their lives, achieve their goals, break the cycle of poverty, and improve their quality of life, through the design and implementation of extracurricular activities of applied training, development of projects and participation in work internships.

During the first period of project development, 160 CYP participated, 83 boys and 77 girls. Plus, 65 CYP from the families and community were also d. 143 parents were positively affected by the participation of their children in the project and 18 teachers learned new techniques on education.

More than 22 sessions on agro-ecology and sustainable tourism were carried out, as well as 20 sessions on vocational training and English language. CYP felt encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities and created a communications collective, where podcasts, videoblogs and other activities were successfully completed.

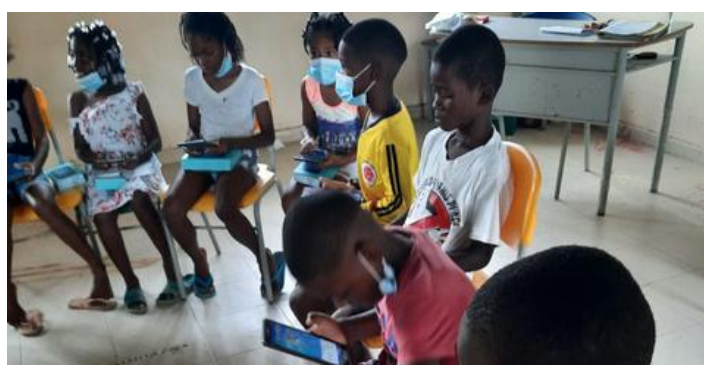


Project: Children Acting for Peace and Rights in Acadesan" **Acadesan Foundation**

This project is based in the Pacific region of Colombia and aims for 300 Afro-Colombian children from Chocó in three local schools to develop socio-emotional skills and improve their capacities to participate in peace-building processes and to involve themselves in the protection of the environment within their territories.

This is an ongoing project that started in April of 2021 and began to generate great results. However, the project was paused in October due to the socio-political issues present in the region, such as shortages, mining stoppage, minefields, difficulties when accessing communities, among other related issues. Alongside our project partner

Acadesan and the strong willingness of the community we were able to continue this project in 2022. During this period, the project was developed in two out of the three educational entities estimated - Potedó and Cucurupí. For the upcoming period, the project will be developed in three different schools. Among all the possible participants in the project, **227 children were direct beneficiaries**. Initially, the project estimated 200 would be the direct child beneficiaries from the project. This represents an increase of almost 12% of the overall participation.





2.

SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

“Reducing conflict-related sexual violence and commercial sexual exploitation against children and young people” – ACJ and CDE Foundations

This project supports children affected by, and at risk of, conflict-related sexual violence and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) in the cities of Quibdó, Cartagena and Bogotá by strengthening their capacities to overcome the trauma they suffer as a result of their experiences and to help them understand how to protect themselves from future violence.

This year, the estimated number of children and young people, both direct and indirect, who would benefit from the project within the approach of the initial proposal was 448. The **actual number of CYP that have benefited from it during this period is 1,141. This represents an increment of the 39% of CYP who have benefited, including both direct and indirect beneficiaries.**

In the case of Cartagena and Quibdó (CDE) 64 CYP were direct beneficiaries of the project: 53 children (17 masculine, 36 female) and 11 young leaders (6 male and 5 female).

At least 80% of children and young people are now trained in self-care and self-protection practices and tools; they know how to act when facing risks in their communities, 70% of families and caregivers participated and contributed to the reduction of gender-based violence, sexual violence and CSEC and 80% of community members (public officials, teachers, community leaders, and youth leaders) participate in advocacy activities to demand the protection of children's rights.

Short Film Festival: In July, a "smartphone short film festival contest" was held. In this festival, young people performed different stagings to promote CYP rights. A Facebook live was launched to award the best, encouraging art peace (film). There was the participation of 60 young people, managing to strengthen their technological skills.

19th Street Festival: earlier this year, one of our supporters: 8020REI visited ACJ's project in Bogotá alongside our MEAL Officer. They experienced this festival full of dance, music and artistic expressions from the children of the foundation.

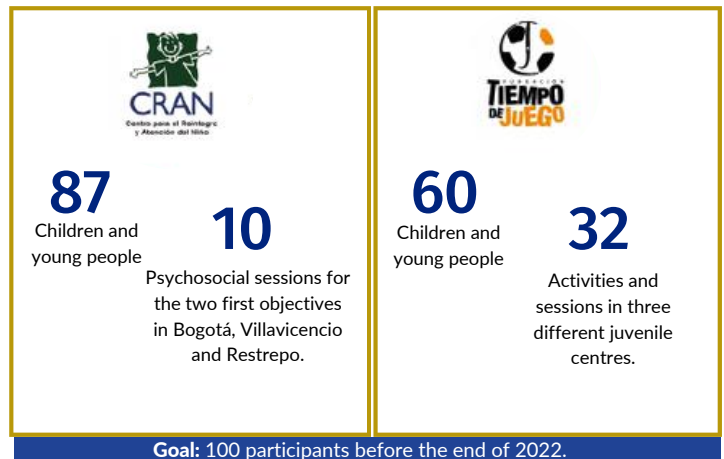




FORCED RECRUITMENT INTO ARMED GROUPS OR CRIMINAL EXPLOITATION AND REINTEGRATION INTO SOCIETY

Youth Reintegration Into Society: A Community-based Approach Towards Mental Health” - TDJ and CRAN Foundations

We launched this project in July 2022! It provides a novel community-based narrative approach to psychosocial care, trauma and reintegration that would help children and young people (CYP) at risk of joining gangs and young people formerly associated with armed groups to gain access to the resources and skills they need to deal with a variety of traumatic situations and stigmas. The purpose of this project is that CYP enhance positive bonds within the community and change situations of vulnerability and criminality through the use of narratives of resilience, creating protective and healing environments. So far, the results have been amazing! Please take a look at the figures:



WHAT DID WE DO IN TERMS OF CAPACITY BUILDING?

Children Change Colombia has been working with local partners in Colombia for several years, and we have put reporting and administration systems in place during that time which will enable us to track expenditure and impact. Our partners report to us biannually on activities, finance, and achievements, and every quarter regarding outstanding activities. The partners will use different tools to monitor progress against a set of clearly defined processes and activity indicators, relevant to the outcomes specified above, and periodic meetings will be held between project managers and coordinators in order to monitor the progress of the project. CCC has a MEAL Officer based in Colombia who support the partners in the writing the project proposals, oversees the work, visits the projects on a regular basis and offer technical and financial support, advising on any issues that arise.

CCC has two technical partnerships with UK-based organizations specializing in Childhood Trauma and Safeguarding. Action for Child Trauma International trains and supports local people and NGO staff, giving them the skills to treat children and young people traumatized by conflict, violence, and disaster. With them we implemented a face to face workshop in Bogotá taught by instructors Pilu Rivas and Almudena García, who travelled with the Operations Manager of ACTI, Zara Bracegirdle, from Spain and the UK to Bogotá to deliver the course.

CCC staff and 19 representatives from our partner organisations came together from several regions of Colombia including Quibdó, Cartagena, Santa Marta and La Guajira. ACTI also provided online training to civil servants from the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF), which whom this year CCC signed a technical cooperation agreement. The ICBF also gave a workshop to our partners on sexual and gender violence and the report pathways in Colombia.

CCC also established new partnerships with **ImmerseMe** and the **Rebel Business School**, experts in the project, in regard to Entrepreneurship and English courses for example.



CCC has also developed safeguarding activities such as:

- Safeguarding workshop with the focal points of the CCC project partners. Both staff of CDE and ACJ teams participated. During these workshops, general safeguards and appropriate mechanisms for the implementation of effective safeguard mechanisms in organizations were discussed. Strategies and experiences of partners on the subject were also shared.
- CCC has developed encounters with the ICBF (Colombian National Institute of Family Welfare), seeking to articulate the institutional framework. In these activities, face-to-face sessions were developed to strengthen joint work strategies.
- Technical assistance sessions were arranged by the ICBF team for members to publicize the ICBF care routes (know-how) in cases of violence. To date, a workshop was held to disseminate intersectoral care routes for care for girls, boys, and adolescents who are victims of sexual violence, with the participation of teams from ACJ, CDE, and other CCC partners.



ACTI workshop with partners in Bogotá, Feb 2022

UPCOMING PROJECT AND NEWS

We are very pleased to announce our upcoming project for 2023: **"Education, Livelihoods and Young Entrepreneurship in the Caribbean"** which essentially takes into practice all the learned lessons from two pilots "O-lab App: Improving access to education for indigenous children in rural areas in La Guajira Colombia" and "Education and Empowerment for Change and Innovation in La Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta". This is the first time CCC will implement a project directly, so our team in Colombia will grow next year.

"Education, Livelihoods and Young Entrepreneurship in the Caribbean- Mision Gaia and Children Change Colombia"

The project seeks to educate and motivate students and teachers of the educational institutions in the Caribbean Coast, for the development of professional and personal skills that will allow them to improve their academic and professional performance, feel empowered in their lives, reach their goals and break the cycles of poverty and improve their livelihoods, through the design and implementation of extracurricular activities of applied formation, entrepreneurial project development and livelihood trainings.

These are the beneficiaries of this project:

Direct			
Year	Students	Teachers	Entrepreneurs
2023	500	30	60

Indirect				
Year	Students	Parents and carers	Teachers	Entrepreneur
2023	1,500	1,000	90	180

More about the launching of this project and news about it on our webpage!



Football for Peace, a brand new project from our partnership with **Acadesan**.

This project, coordinated by our partner organisation Acadesan: "Football for Peace in Acadesan", aims to prevent child recruitment through football in rural Chocó. The project will start in January 2023

The project aims for three hundred Afro-Colombian children divided into twenty two football teams in Chocó to develop socio-emotional skills and improve their capacities to participate in peace-building processes, towards the prevention of forced recruitment.

Sport helps young people connect with their peers and community, gives them a sense of belonging, and helps children develop skills in critical thinking, empathy and managing emotions. Above all, it provides safe spaces where children can simply be children.



Launching a new partnership with **Fundación Oro Molido**

This foundation works on education and health projects in Antioquia, Huila and Magdalena. We will tell more about this new partnership over the course of 2023.

OROMOLIDO
FUNDACIÓN

Events

Thames Walk

In June, we held our annual Thames Walk, which included a walk along the Thames and a picnic in Richmond Park. Overall, the day was a great success,

With a record 130 people attending and over £10,000 raised! It was a beautiful summer's day, where the CCC team and our wonderful supporters could gather together and share our love of Colombia.



Dinner Auction in Kent

On the 3rd of September, Cori Hollenbach, Trustee of CCC organised a dinner and a silent auction in Kent. The food was prepared by Colombian Head Chef, Oscar Fonesca, and the auction featured luxury Colombian artisanal designs. In addition, the following weekend Cori and her husband Beckett rode from London to Brighton to raise funds for this project. They raised an amazing total of £15,000.



Project Talk

On November the 8th, we held our annual Project Talk, an evening where people connected to CCC can come together in support of our common cause. This year the event was held at The Hippodrome in London and was a great success with 70 people attending. The event featured talks from our team in the UK and in Colombia, as well as the chance to hear from the children we support. We also showcased our new virtual reality English learning software which will be part of our upcoming project in the Gran Caribe.



THANK YOU!

For more information and further queries please
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